

that bill, pass it, and send it to me for my signature. Protecting America is our most solemn obligation, and I urge the House to pass this bill without delay.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1927.

Statement on House of Representatives Passage of Intelligence Reform Legislation

August 4, 2007

Tonight the House joined the Senate in passing legislation that will close a critical gap in our intelligence collection, and I appreciate their efforts to complete the legislation before the August recess. The Director of National Intelligence, Mike McConnell, has assured me that this bill gives him what he needs to continue to protect the country, and therefore, I will sign this legislation as soon as it gets to my desk.

I also want to remind Congress that our work on reforming the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is not complete. When Congress returns in September, we need to work together on additional reforms, including the important issue of providing meaningful liability protection to those who are alleged to have assisted our Nation following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 1927.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Intelligence Reform Legislation

August 5, 2007

When our intelligence professionals have the legal tools to gather information about the intentions of our enemies, America is safer. And when these same legal tools also protect the civil liberties of Americans, then we can have the confidence to know that we can preserve our freedoms while making America safer.

The Protect America Act, passed with bipartisan support in the House and Senate, achieves both of these goals by modernizing the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Over the past three decades, this law has not kept pace with revolutionary changes in tech-

nology. As a result, our intelligence professionals have told us that they are missing significant intelligence information that they need to protect the country.

S. 1927 reforms FISA by accounting for changes in technology and restoring the statute to its original focus on appropriate protections for the rights of persons in the United States and not foreign targets located in foreign lands.

Today, we face a dynamic threat from enemies who understand how to use modern technology against us. Whether foreign terrorists, hostile nations, or other actors, they change their tactics frequently and seek to exploit the very openness and freedoms we hold dear. Our tools to deter them must also be dynamic and flexible enough to meet the challenges they pose. This law gives our intelligence professionals this greater flexibility while closing a dangerous gap in our intelligence gathering activities that threatened to weaken our defenses.

We know that information we have been able to acquire about foreign threats will help us detect and prevent attacks on our homeland. Mike McConnell, the Director of National Intelligence, has assured me that this bill gives him the most immediate tools he needs to defeat the intentions of our enemies. And so in signing this legislation today, I am heartened to know that his critical work will be strengthened, and we will be better armed to prevent attacks in the future.

I commend Members of Congress who supported these important reforms and also for acting before adjourning for recess. In particular, I want to thank Mitch McConnell and John Boehner for their strong leadership on this issue and Senators Kit Bond and Dianne Feinstein for coming together in the Senate on an effective bipartisan solution. In the House of Representatives, Pete Hoekstra and Heather Wilson were instrumental in securing enactment of this vital piece of legislation before the August recess, and I thank them for their leadership.

While I appreciate the leadership it took to pass this bill, we must remember that our work is not done. This bill is a temporary, narrowly focused statute to deal with the most immediate shortcomings in the law.